

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) An airbag for protecting an occupant, comprising:
  - a left half airbag to be deployed on a left side of the occupant,
  - a right half airbag to be deployed on a right side of the occupant, said left and right half airbags being separated from each other, and
  - a width constraining ~~means~~ device attached to an inner middle area inside the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively, ~~for said width constraining device~~ constraining lateral widths thereof of the respective left half airbag and right half airbag when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.
2. (currently amended) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said width constraining ~~means~~ device is formed of a string.
3. (currently amended) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said width constraining ~~means~~ device includes joining ~~means~~ devices for directly joining panels for constituting the left half airbag and the right half airbag, respectively.
4. (currently amended) An airbag for protecting an occupant, comprising:
  - a left half airbag to be deployed on a left side of the occupant,
  - a right half airbag to be deployed on a right side of the occupant, and
  - a width constraining ~~means~~ device attached to an inner middle area inside the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively, ~~for said width constraining device~~ constraining lateral widths thereof of the respective left half airbag and right half airbag when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated,

wherein said left half airbag and right half airbag have distal ends facing the occupant, said distal ends being separated from each other so that a space is formed between the distal ends facing the occupant when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.

5. (original) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said left half airbag is connected to the right half airbag at midsections thereof in a direction that the left half airbag and the right half airbag deploy.

6. (currently amended) An airbag according to claim 1, further comprising a vertical width constraining means for device, said vertical width constraining device constraining vertical widths of the left half airbag and the right half airbag disposed inside the respective left and right half airbags when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are deployed.

7. (original) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said left half airbag and said right half airbag includes an inclined upper portion so that the one of the left half airbag and the right half airbag does not contact an interior of a vehicle when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.

8. (currently amended) An airbag, comprising:

a left half airbag to be deployed on a left side of the an occupant,

a right half airbag to be deployed on a right side of the occupant, and

width constraining means attached to an inner middle area inside the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively, for constraining lateral widths thereof when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated,

wherein at least one of said left half airbag and said right half airbag includes a portion having a thickness gradually decreasing upwardly when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.

9. (original) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said left half airbag and said right half airbag have distal ends thereof separated by a distance of 150 - 350 mm when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are deployed.

10. (previously presented) An airbag according to claim 1, further comprising a base communicating with the left and right half airbags, said left and right half airbags separately projecting outwardly from the base.
11. (original) An airbag apparatus comprising the airbag according to claim 1 and an inflator for inflating the airbag.
12. (previously presented) An airbag according to claim 1, further comprising a connecting portion connecting the left half airbag to the right half airbag at midsections thereof in a direction that the left half airbag and the right half airbag deploy, and a distance between a rear end of the deployed airbag and the connecting portion being in the range of about 30% to about 70% of a length from the rear end to a front end of the deployed airbag.
13. (new) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said width constraining device comprises a first constraining device disposed inside the left half airbag, and a second constraining device disposed inside the right half airbag.
14. (new) An airbag according to claim 13, wherein said first and second constraining devices are connecting belts for limiting expansion of the left and right half airbags in a direction substantially perpendicularly to a direction that the left and right half airbags extend to the occupant.
15. (new) An airbag according to claim 4, wherein said width constraining device comprises a first constraining device disposed inside the left half airbag, and a second constraining device disposed inside the right half airbag.
16. (new) An airbag according to claim 15, wherein said first and second constraining devices are connecting belts for limiting expansion of the left and right half airbags in a direction substantially perpendicularly to a direction that the left and right half airbags extend to the occupant.